

Hobbies

Questions about pesos and rupees, old silver dollars and dirty pennies

By Roger Boye

Here are the answers to more questions from Chicago Tribune readers.

Q—I got a large quantity of Japanese "occupation currency" while in the Philippines at the end of World War II. The denominations include pesos, dollars and rupees. How much are they worth?

Y. L., Chicago

A—Your bills have no legal-tender value and probably would retail for less than \$1 each as collectibles. Thousands of U.S. servicemen brought "occupation money" home with them, which has kept the hobby market well

supplied with most varieties of the currency. Japan issued pesos for the Philippines, dollars for Malaya and rupees for Burma.

Q—How much would we get for our old U.S. silver dollars? The dates range from 1882 to 1923. Also, what's their silver content?

I. P., Orland Park

A—Prices vary with year, mint mark and condition. Some Chicago-area dealers are paying about \$7.50 each for the "common dates," such as an 1882 no mint mark dollar in "very fine condition." Rarer specimens—including the 1893s, 1895s and any with a "CC" mint mark—can fetch much higher amounts. Each coin contains .77 of an ounce of

silver.

(Readers who want a free price guide to all U.S. silver dollars made between 1878 and 1935 should send a stamped, business-size envelope to Roger Boye, Chicago Tribune, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.)

Q—I'm having trouble finding in my pocket change Lincoln pennies made after 1974 with "S" mint marks. Do such coins exist?

H. D., Chicago

A—All S-mint (for San Francisco) Lincolns produced since 1975 have gone into government proof sets. You won't find any in circulation, unless someone spends a proof coin by accident.

Q—Are 2-cent pieces dated 1865, 1867 and 1868 rare? Also, why did the government make such an odd-denomination coin?

L. P., Bloomington

A—Each of the three coins sells for \$5 or less if in "good condition." Uncle Sam issued 2-cent pieces for 10 years starting in 1864 to help relieve a severe shortage of "hard money" created by the Civil War.

Q—Several Indian-head pennies I inherited are covered with tarnish and dirt. Please send instructions on how to shine my coins.

M. J., Delavan, Wis.

A—Don't try to clean them. Collectors prefer to own rarities that are in their natural, dirty

state. Coins cleaned by amateurs [especially copper money] almost always sell at a discount on the hobby market.